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THE WINE QUESTION.

By Nath'l Hewit, Pastor of the Bridgeport Congregational Church, Ct.
Late General Agent of the American Temperance Society.

Bridgeport, Ct., April 22d, 1839,

Mr. Editor,

Dear Sir: The following *Address* was written by me as Chairman of a Committee appointed by a Temperance Convention held in Hartford, Ct., in September 1836. Of the Resolutions adopted by that Convention, the following only are selected as having relation to the address itself, and to the manner in which it was suppressed:

3. *Resolved*, That while the Convention review, with gratitude and rejoicing, the progress of the cause under the pledge on which our Societies were originally established, yet, in their view, that pledge is not adapted to carry out the reformation, inasmuch as it only *recommends* and REQUIRES abstinence from intoxicating drinks, in *one* form, while other intoxicating drinks, calculated to cause and perpetuate intemperate habits, are unnoticed, and apparently countenanced;—therefore, this Convention *recommend* the adoption, by the State, and all local Societies, of the *principle* of entire abstinence from the use, as a beverage, of all drinks that can intoxicate.

13. *Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to draft an address to the people of the State, and that the Executive Committee of the State Society be requested to take measures to have said address extensively circulated. [Rev. Dr.

Hewit, Hon. R. M. Sherman and Rev. Mr. Lindsley, were appointed as this committee. Mr. Sherman having declined, on account of pressing engagements, Rev. Mr. Bacon was substituted in his place.]

17. *Resolved*, That the proceeding of this Convention, with the Address to be prepared by the committee appointed for this purpose, be printed under the direction of the Executive Committee.

My address was submitted to my colleagues, and with slight alterations it was approved and adopted by them, and transmitted to John T. Norton, Esq., of Farmington, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the State Temperance Society. Some days afterward I received from that gentleman a letter of which the following is a copy.

Farmington, Oct. 25, 1836.

Rev. and Dear Sir: The address to the people of the State, prepared by you under the resolution of the late Temperance Convention has been received by the Executive Committee of the State Temperance Society; and on reading it, whilst they are interested in the train of argument and in the views presented, and agree fully in the conclusions and recommendations, yet they feel some embarrassment in relation to publishing it entire, and they have concluded therefore to go frankly to yourself and state their difficulties.

No Temperance convention has been held in the United States so characterized by a spirit of harmony as the one lately held at Hartford; and the resolutions and proceedings which the committee intend to publish and circulate as soon as the address is ready, are such as the Convention approved, with almost entire unanimity, and they are such as will, they believe, unite all the friends of the cause in *action*, although they may not all arrive at their conclusions precisely in the same way.

Your address the committee would be glad to see published entire with your name to it; as they believe it would influence a large number of the good friends of the cause to more decided action. But it seems to them that an address *from the Convention, to the people of the State*, should conform entirely with the resolutions and spirit of the Convention, and be adapted to general circulation amongst all classes and denominations of people.

The committee fear that some parts of your address will

be considered as not in harmony with the spirit of the Convention, and as expressing your particular views and the views of a part only of the members of that body. The question they have asked themselves has been, Would the Convention have approved of the address entire? They are compelled to adopt the opinion that it would not. They may be mistaken, but such being their opinion, they can do no other than submit the matter again to you, and ask you to take it into consideration and favor them with your views on the subject.

So much time has elapsed since the Convention, that the committee feel very desirous that as little additional delay shall take place as possible, and they take the liberty therefore to ask if they may use the address, omitting some points and expressions upon which there is a difference of opinion amongst the sound friends of the cause? They propose this, only in the event that your time will not permit you to do it yourself, in case you consent to do it at all. The alterations of course to be submitted to you before publication.

The Committee would state explicitly (lest you should fear their ultraism) that they have never been on the "sin per se" ground, and they deprecate all and every interference on the part of Temperance Societies with the question of the use of wine at the communion. There were individuals in the Convention, however, who voted for the resolutions, who think it a sin to use alcoholic drinks as a beverage under any circumstances, and there were those who think that the unfermented juice of the grape should be used at the communion. These questions, and the relative grade of intoxicating drinks on the great scale of drunkenness were purposely kept out of view in the resolutions, as questions that the Convention could not settle, and with which they should have nothing to do.

The committe propose to publish a sketch of the remarks of the principal speakers on the 1st and 3d resolutions, and also the remarks of yourself, Mr. Bacon, and Professor Goodrich on the resolution offered by the latter at the close of the meeting. Will it be convenient for you to furnish a sketch of your remarks?

The committee make this communication with feelings of the utmost respect, and with a sincere desire as far as possible to be governed by your views and to profit by your wisdom and experience. By order of the Committee,

JOHN T. NORTON, Chairman.

In my reply to the above letter, I refused to admit of any alteration in the text of the address, but granted the committee my consent to their prefixing or annexing to it what they pleased in their own names. After two months delay, I received the following ultimate decision of that committee.

Farmington, Dec. 26th, 1836.

My Dear Sir: I intended before this to have sent you the enclosed manuscript, but I have been much absent myself, and it has been difficult to get the views of the gentlemen with whom I am associated on the State Temperance committee in relation to its publication, owing to their residing at a distance from each other.

The committe still think it does not express the views of the Convention, and as no means were provided to defray the expenses of publication, the committee do not feel bound to publish it, as they do not feel disposed to pay the expense themselves, nor could they under such circumstances solicit means from others. The proceedings of the Convention will also go unpublished, unless the committee should by and by issue a pamphlet containing some statistical information which they are collecting, when they might publish the resolutions adopted, and such of the speeches delivered at the Convention as they have been able to obtain.

I remain, with sincere respect and affection,

Your friend and ob't serv't.

Rev. Dr. Hewit. John T. Norton.

I forbear all comment on these extraordinary proceedings. They speak for themselves. I should not, in this public manner, advert to them, or attempt to publish what that respectable committee deemed it their duty to suppress, in violation of all the usages of the civilized world, were it not that I am represented by various persons as an apostate from my principles, and an enemy of that great and good work, which I formerly labored to promote. I give you that address without alteration. It contains my present views, and my practice is conformable to them.

Yours truly,

N. Hewit.

ADDRESS,

To the Friends of Temperance in Connecticut.

In view of the foregoing proceedings of the Convention, we would respectfully urge on you a renewed and vigorous support of the great and good work in which we are engaged. The Temperance reform has lost its novelty without losing any thing of its importance. After all that has been done, which is indeed prodigious, intemperance in every form of it remains amongst us, and new victims are daily slaughtered at its altars. We have, moreover, reason to fear, that in some places there is of late an increased consumption of spirituous liquors; that in such places they are both sold and drank more openly than at any time since Temperance Societies were introduced amongst us. This deplorable relapse is doubtless to be attributed in a great measure to local causes; and we should regard them as temporary and easily obviated, if there were not also generally in our State a manifest decline in zeal and activity in many of the members of our Society, and a growing indifference to the whole subject in the people at large. To revive our decaying zeal, and to awaken again universal attention to this momentous object, the late Convention was called. The effect of its deliberations on ourselves, is in a high degree propitious. Confidence is restored and prejudices are removed. With united views and resolutions, we purpose to renew our joint labors, and advance together as one. Should the sentiments which prevailed in the Convention pervade and control all the Societies of our State, we shall confidently anticipate, under the Divine blessing, a general revival of the Temperance cause on solid and enduring principles.

The main design of this Address, is briefly to state what were the opinions of the Convention on the chief causes of the present unpromising state of the Temperance reform, and the means of remedying the evil.

Before we proceed to do this, it should be premised, that this benevolent enterprise shares in common with the other charitable and religious interests of our country, in the disas-

trous effects of the selfish and worldly spirit which rages with extraordinary virulence throughout the land, and we may add, throughout the Christian world. If all other institutions of charity and piety were in a healthful and prosperous condition, and the Temperance Society alone was falling to decay, we might well suspect that it was not worthy to live. But we may derive consolation and hope from the reflection, that as our cause is depressed alike with the ordinances of God and the word of his grace, it shall revive again when "he shall appear in his glory, and build up Zion." This consideration ought to restrain us from imputing *all* the embarrassments under which the Temperance cause now labors to any thing peculiar to itself. If every person and thing appertaining to our great and good institution were faultless, it does not follow that it forthwith would flourish and prevail: for the "word of God is perfect," yet it has not "free course," nor is it "glorified" in the conversion of all men. We say these things, not to preclude an unsparing scrutiny into the faults of temperance men and measures, but to the end that we may proceed therein cautiously, and avoid the groundless inference, that because the temperance work is in a measure at a stand, and there is "a strike" among some of the "hands," it must of necessity arise from defects inherent in the system itself, or be laid exclusively at the door of any portion of its friends.

We ought, moreover, to bear in mind that the temperance system is still in its infancy. Whatever may be said of the abstinence from spirituous liquors which has at any time heretofore obtained among other nations, it is in various important respects totally unlike the temperance reform of our own. The ancient oriental philosophy taught the monstrous dogma, that the matter of which man's body is composed is substantial wickedness, and it proscribed all inebriating drinks as well as generous meats, because they nourished and excited a man of sin. Infected and corrupted by this philosophy many Christian sects in the early ages practised all manner of bodily mortifications, hoping to kill the vices of the soul by the emaciation of the body. Mahomet interdicted wine to his disciples, with the crafty design of erecting an insurmountable "wall of partition" between them and all Christians, and of deposing Christ from his supremacy by abolishing the visible symbol of his authority in that "cup of the New Testament in his blood." That wily

impostor discovered the infallible connection between the belief that wine is in all cases pernicious to men, and the consequent abhorrence of the Christian religion. The ancient schools of the athletæ subjected their disciples to rigid abstemiousness, that they might emulate the brutes in their physical powers: to run as the horse, and to fight as the bear and the dog. For temporary or sinister ends, all manner of persons have voluntarily undergone privations both of flesh and wine; for it is nothing new or strange for men to feed some one master appetite or passion on the sacrifice of others. But, we trust, our own temperance system has a higher origin, a purer character, and a better end than any of these. It is not the offspring of a false philosophy, or a spurious religion. Its life and vigor depend not on the corrupt passions or perverted opinions of sects and parties. It is not a tool or weapon in the hands of the crafty and ambitious. In its legitimate character it is most simple and pure. Without an interpreter it can be read and understood of all men. It needs not the subtleties of the schools for its exposition and defence. It asks not the patronage of a party, nor is it dependent on the learned and the great. In a word, it is a grace of the spirit of Christ, brought forth from its long seclusion in the kingdom of wisdom and mercy, and embodies in a social form, and made visible and accessible to all. Mankind wanted no prophet to reveal to them the evils of intemperate drinking. Every family almost, had a domestic altar to this obscene and bloody demon. The father or the son was the prophet and the priest and victim. It was a reformer and redeemer which was needed, who should enter in and abide with every household, that he might be ever at hand to help in the time of need. The temperance plan is that deliverer. By bitter experience the people had learned the mischiefs of spirituous liquors, and on the other hand a few had been taught by experience the safety and blessings of entire abstinence from distilled spirits. The few brought forth their experience for the instruction and reformation of the many; and for the sake of expedition and efficiency embodied their wisdom and example in the forms of a social compact, and put on the livery of a new and distinct community. The temperance system therefore is a plain, simple, common sense, matter-of-fact affair, remote from all mystery and complexity: an every day *homespun* concern. It was fondly hoped by its first promoters, that it would be let alone

by all curious and meddlesome persons; and be allowed to spread over the land like air, and water, and sunshine, for the benefit of any body and every body, without being altered and fixed, now to this one's notions, and now to that one's: that it would escape the toils of party-spirit, and never become a subject for wits and philosophers to write and dispute about. But these perils have beset the temperance reform early in its career; and we have new evidence of the humiliating truth, that the gifts of God, either in nature, providence, or grace, cannot be put into the hands of men without being defiled by their sooty fingers; for the hands of the best of men are not spotless. In short, the temperance reform is in the hands of depraved and erring men; who are obliged to do their work over and over again, before they can make it right; and in this recent combination of multitudes of all descriptions of mankind, the wonder is, that they have gone on together so long and so well, and not that they have, in some measure, fallen out by the way.

It is well known that the debates and divisions among the friends of temperance, proceed chiefly from conflicting opinions about the propriety of putting fermented liquors on *a level* with distilled spirits, and of subjecting them to the same *absolute* proscription. We intend not a review of this controversy, or, in our representative capacity as a delegated Convention, do we wish to be understood as siding with either party on this question. We shall advert to so much of this excitable subject, as is necessary to produce, if it be possible, mutual forbearance on the part of all the upright and judicious friends of the common cause. And here it may be of use to recur to an ancient controversy, in some repects analogous to this. In the apostolic age of the Christian church, dissension arose amongst the Jewish and Gentile converts about "meats and drinks." Respecting these contentions, the inspired apostle enjoined on all parties to "follow after the things which make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another." The mode of conciliation which he proposed we find in Rom. xiv. 1–3: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to *doubtful disputations*. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth, *despise* him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, *judge* him that eateth: for God hath received him." The Gentile believer regarded the scruples of his Jewish brother

with contempt, and "despised" him for his ignorance and stupidity in supposing that "any thing was unclean of itself." The Jewish convert, on the other hand, abhorred the licentiousness of his Gentile brother, and "judged" him as guilty of sin in eating that which was "unclean." The apostle adjusts the controversy by denominating it a "doubtful disputation." Both parties were prohibited from pronouncing an absolute judgment in the case, and each left to the free exercise of his private judgment, subject to the law of "walking charitably" with differing brethren. In like manner, we may say of the question, whether fermented liquors are of the same species as distilled spirits, that it is one of "doubtful disputation." The learned in these matters—the "doctors of the law"—contend about it, and are like to, for ought we can see, without end. At any rate, it is an intricate and puzzling question for the multitude of mankind, whose welfare, *be it remembered*, gives to the temperance society *all its importance*. The knowledge of men in general is acquired mainly by observation and experience, and not from books and the laboratories of philosophers. Common experience manifests several points of difference between the produce of a cider-mill and the produce of a cider-still. Dissolute men are witnesses to a material diversity between cider and cider-brandy; for as intemperate drinkers advance downward in excessive drinking, they pass onward from simple cider to cider-brandy, and never from cider-brandy backward to mere cider when both are equally at their option. Sober men, (whose sobriety is a virtue of the mind and not a physical habit of the body,) who use but never abuse simple and pure cider, and other fermented liquors in an unadulterated state, feel no desire for the fiery and acid spirits of the still; but the distempered and raging lust of the drunkard cannot be quieted by the mild stimulus of simple cider or pure wine, but ravenously demands the hot and high pressure powers of the spirits of cider or of wine. The common terms used to designate these articles, indicate a real or apparent difference between them. Wine, and the spirits of wine, to the common sort of people, mean very different things. Chemical analysis, it is true, discloses the fact that the active and characteristic property of these liquids belongs to an element common to both. In like manner the laboratory of the chemist reveals the astonishing fact that the diamond and charcoal are essentially the same; yet

common observation and the usages of mankind make no small difference between diamonds and charcoal. These observations show us conclusively, that for the moral and practical uses of the body of mankind, it will never do for the Temperance Society to proceed on the assumption that there is not a material difference between fermented liquids and distilled spirits. The moral duties of men can never rest secure on doubtful principles. The most speedy and effectual method of corrupting the moral character of man, is to impose on his conscience obligations of doubtful authority. Hence all extravagance both in religion and morals is uniformly succeeded by profanenesss and profligacy.

It remains that we briefly advert to another most momentous relation of the question under consideration. How much soever the advocates of an indiscriminate proscription of all fermented liquors may deprecate any interference on their part with the faith and worship of the church of Christ, it is found, in fact, impossible to prevent it. Just as soon as it was perceived that statements concerning wine were obtaining credit among the friends of temperance societies, which bore directly on the Lord's Supper in such a manner as to bring into question the propricty of using wine in its observance, great numbers of professing Christians, with the great body of gospel ministers, took the alarm, as well they might. For whatever a few may think of it, it is most evident to every sober-minded and well-informed man, whether he be a member of the church or not, that the agitation of that question in the church would be followed by the most pestilent consequences. Subjects of far less moment than this, have gendered bitter and lasting strife, and split the church into factions and separations. Besides, what conscientious professor of religion can fail of discovering the painful and perilous state which every humble and devout disciple of Christ must be in, if he is made to doubt whether he is not guilty of sin in drinking of the "cup of the New Testament in Christ's blood." Remember those axioms of gospel holiness, "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin," and "he that doubteth is damned if he eat," and then consider the dreadful predicament of every sincere and upright Christian, who approaches the Lord's table with the doubt festering in his mind, that peradventure the cup of wine is but "a broth of abomination." Can any man, wonder now, that the progress of the temperance reform when it seemed to turn to-

wards a result of this fearful nature, was regarded with alarm by the great body of pastors and churches? Furthermore, the tendency of certain representations of the nature and effects of pure wine, which have been extensively made, and we fear, believed, reaches if possible still further than the effects above mentioned. They seem to touch the person of Christ himself, and bring the moral perfection of his habits and example into doubt. He drank wine: the same in kind of which other men drank, and which, when used immoderately, produced intoxication. His enemies took advantage of this, and reproached him "as a man that was gluttonous and a wine bibber—a friend of publicans and sinners." The defamers of Christ appear to have regarded his "eating and drinking," either as intrinsically vicious, or as culpable because it seemed to countenance publicans and sinners in their excesses, or both. According to methods of reasoning adopted by some in our day, these maligners of Christ were in the right. Those who speak of pure wine as intrinsically pernicious, and those who affirm that although it be not itself deleterious, yet it is criminal to drink it, lest the example be abused by others to their temporal and eternal ruin, would do well most seriously to inquire whether they do not justify the ancient aspersions cast on the conduct of our Lord. Hence it should cease to be a matter of surprise and scandal, that great numbers of ministers and church members revolted at sentiments, the apparent tendency of which is, to hold up to mankind the character and example of Christ, as prejudicial to sound morals and the happiness of men.

It seems almost superfluous to add, that, if temperance societies insist on the condemnation of unadulterated wine, and its exclusion from the church, in common with distilled spirits, as intrinsically and universally mischievous, they must make up their minds to witness the secession of the church of Christ from all further fellowship with them. And as the temperance reform is a bough of the church *shooting over the wall*, just as soon as it is cut off from its parent stock it will wither away and die—unless, planted in some unhallowed soil, it lives to bear "the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah." We ought further to consider that there is a growing jealousy on the part of many Christians of the highest reputation for wisdom and piety, of the ultimate efforts of self-constituted societies, aiming at a control over public opinion, and composed of all

manner of persons, without regard to their principles and characters, save in that point of union which is the heart and core of their respective communities. Whenever any of these directly intermeddle with the internal affairs of the "household of faith," and attempt to give laws to the "freemen of the Lord," is it to be wondered at that the intruders are indignantly repelled? Where no direct attempt is made on the independence and liberty of the church, it is not difficult to discern, that through those individuals who are members in common both of the church and of such societies, the church may be brought under the control of bodies of men foreign to itself. For "as no man can serve two masters," if gospel ministers and professing Christians, as the members of the Temperance Society for example, imbibe opinions and assume obligations which in any one important particular interfere with the faith, worship and discipline of the churches, they must of course so far forth as they are honest associates of their temperance brethren and obedient to the principles of that society, become dissentient members of the church. Thus circumstanced, they must either "walk disorderly" in the church, or seek to innovate on its customs, and propagate in it the new views which they have brought with them from abroad. Aware of this, not a few of the former most active and efficient friends of the temperance cause, in view of the tendency of much that has been said and attempted in regard to wine, and governed by the immutable axiom of truth and righteousness, that "we ought to obey God rather than man" have of late stood on one side, "watching whereunto this new thing would grow." Not to dwell further on this matter, we would merely state, that enough has been said to show, that the further agitation of the *wine question*, in the *manner and form* of much of the recent discussion of it, must forthwith cease, if we would not dismember our societis and thereby inflict on them a mortal wound.

It was on grounds substantially as stated above, that the Convention came to the harmonious result, of making in future a palpable difference in practice corresponding to the difference in belief, which obtains with the great body of temperance men. This difference is indicated in the words and phrases employed in the third Resolution. In respect to the old pledge of total abstinence from distilled spirits, it remains unaltered. This total abstinence is *required*—

a specific *pledge* to that effect *is required.* In regard to fermented liquors (meaning always *pure unadulterated* liquors) a *principle*—a *principle* in distinction from a pledge—is *recommended*, recommended, not *required.* We earnestly desire that the difference here made, may be carefully noted, and ingenuously and faithfully recognised, and uprightly and perseveringly observed and maintained. To preclude as much as possible all opportunity for over-zealous individuals to misconstrue and misapply the terms above employed, we will endeavor to set the views of the Convention in a clear light, and give "a certain sound" to their Resolution. This can be done in the easiest and most perspicuous manner, by referring to an analogous case recorded in the New-Testament—the community of goods amongst believers, which prevailed for a time in Jerusalem. In that case, several of the first converts to Christ, "having possessions, sold them and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet;" and "neither said any of them, that ought that he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." Now this proceeding of the first Christians was wholly a spontaneous gush of that "charity which seeketh not her own." The surrender of their property into the hands of the apostles as common stock, for the use of the whole community, was not *demanded—required* by authority of law—by precepts of *binding obligation*, which could not be disobeyed without guilt. This is evident from the reproaches of Peter against Ananias, "whilst it remained was it not *thine own?* and after it was sold, was it not in thine *own power?*" If a community of goods was an integral and essential attribute of the church-state, and conformity to it an indispensable and universal qualification for membership, and no one could be, either in the sight of God or of man, a believer in Christ and a partaker of his salvation except on that condition, the language of Peter to Ananias would be either unintelligible or indefensible. It is most evident that Ananias might have retained his land or his money "in his own power," and *meted out his charity in his own time and way*, without justly exposing himself to censure. The question was, not whether the first disciples should possess and exercise that "charity which seeketh not her own;" but whether it should be exercised *in that way*, viz., by throwing their goods into common stock, and parting with the individual possession and discretionary disposition, each of

his own. By the uncalled-for and spontaneous election of that particular mode of appropriating their own goods on the part of a few of the most opulent of the disciples, a *principle* was brought into the church; and which spread by *imitation*, and not by *legislation*. The adoption of the *principle* was not *required* of any who did not see cause to "go and do likewise." As those who set the example, were moved to it by the free exercise of their private judgment and belief as to the best method of observing that "charity," which as a law was binding on all, so likewise every other member was at liberty to imitate the example or not, without being liable to the suspicion or charge of being destitute of charity and brotherly love. So in the present case, we admit that there is full liberty for all to retain the right to use fermented drinks (under the previous and universal law of "temperance in all things," which binds us all by the authority of God, and which obligation can be neither increased nor diminished by the opinions of men,) and to select that *mode* of exercising the virtue of temperance which may seem to him the best, subject to the common law of right reason and true benevolence, "so to use that which is our own, as not to injure our neighbor." Now the present posture of public morals, in the judgment of able and good men, seems to require an example of the free surrender of the right of using, *as a beverage*, all unadulterated fermented drinks. Freely they have selected this method of curbing the intemperate and pernicious use of fermented liquors, (the most of which, as commonly sold and circulated in this country, are noxious compounds of distilled spirits and poisonous drugs,) and consequently the example is proposed for the imitation of others. This method of proceeding on the grounds above stated, we call *a principle;* and this is recommended to all the temperance societies in the state, and to all the friends of morals and religion amongst us. For we maintain that in this matter "*we have been called to liberty; only we are not to use liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but* BY LOVE TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER."

As to distilled spirits, we are all agreed that the *right to use them as a beverage does not, and never did exist.* We have no warrant from Scripture to that effect. The testimony of the most competent judges, and their effects when used as a beverage, unitedly demonstrate that they are *every way* unfit for use as one of the aliments of the human

body. The *unqualified and absolute obligation* to put them away, may be asserted without scruple. A pledge to that effect can be made with perfect safety, for it will not, directly or indirectly, nearly or remotely, impinge on any article of faith, or rule of duty.

Lest any one should infer that we have given an undue prominence to one side of the question about fermented liquors, and that what we have said on the lawfulness of using *pure wine* may be perverted to a bad end by those who desire a cloak for their luxury and excess, we distinctly and emphatically declare, that out of regard to those who are in danger of falling a prey to drunkenness by means of wine and other fermented liquors, as well as by distilled spirits, WE THINK IT TO BE OUR DUTY, AS WHOLESOME MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND AS CHRISTIANS, TO ABSTAIN FROM ALL FERMENTED DRINKS AS A BEVERAGE. But in order that our example in this case may be blameless on all sides, we deem it of special importance to state, without ambiguity or concealment, the grounds of our belief and practice. We would not confound things that differ, nor sanction opinions which militate against the perfection of the word and ordinances of Christ, or which expose the temperance system to the contempt of judicious and experienced men.

Having in this manner, as we hope, foreclosed all objections drawn from the sacred Scriptures on the intrinsic lawfulness of using pure wine, on all proper occasions, we cannot close this address without lifting our warning voice against the gross wresting of the Scriptures by "unstable men" "to their own destruction," which so fearfully prevails. Under cover of the Bible, as they most profanely pretend, how many there are, in the circles of wealth and fashion, as well as among multitudes of our youth, who are rioting in "excess of wine!" Without all contradiction, immense quantities of counterfeit liquors are freely made, and sold, and drank, which are more deadly than even unadulterated spirits. No man is safe from the poison of the drugged and counterfeit wine, ale and cider, who drinks at all at the bar of taverns, or who sends his vessel to be filled at most of the wine-selling shops. At this juncture we are called upon to beware of every thing of the kind. Persons in health will suffer no inconvenience from the disuse of fermented liquors altogether. The cases wherein they are necessary are so few, and the amount required so small, that by a little pains-

taking they may be procured in a pure state, and all danger and offence be avoided.

We flatter ourselves that the foregoing views will be acceptable to the great body of sober and benevolent men in our State. Let us then cultivate harmony, and with united hearts and hands go forward with our great and necessary work, looking unto God, "the giver of every good and perfect gift," for his presence, protection and blessing.

In behalf of the Committee,

N. Hewit, Chairman.

Bridgeport, Oct. 9th, 1836.

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